

Leadership Council Resolution 2011-10 Adopting a 2020 ecosystem recovery target for dissolved oxygen in marine waters

WHEREAS, RCW 90.71.310(1)(c) states that “The action agenda shall include near-term and long-term benchmarks designed to ensure continuous progress needed to reach the goals, objectives, and designated outcomes by 2020;” and

WHEREAS, RCW 90.71.280(3), “the [leadership] council shall confer with the [science] panel on incorporating ... benchmarks into the action agenda;” and

WHEREAS, the Partnership has applied the term “targets” to refer to long-term benchmarks designed to ensure progress to designated outcomes by 2020; and

WHEREAS, the science-policy workshop convened as part of the Science Panel meeting on December 14, 2010 recommended that the Partnership adopt ecosystem recovery targets to address the full breadth of the Partnership’s interests in a recovered ecosystem as part of the 2011 revisions to the action agenda; and

WHEREAS, dissolved oxygen in marine water provides a key indication that “... waters in the region ... are not harmful to the native marine mammals, fish, birds, and shellfish of the region” (RCW 90.71.300(1)(f)); and

WHEREAS, dissolved oxygen in marine water provides a key indication that “freshwater, estuary, nearshore, marine, and upland habitats are protected, restored, and sustained” (RCW 90.71.300(d)); and

WHEREAS, dissolved oxygen in marine water as evaluated by the Department of Ecology has been identified as a key tool for assessing the effects of wastewater and other human-related sources of pollution on ecosystem condition; and

WHEREAS, technical experts convened by Partnership staff have presented analyses to the Partnership about potential ecosystem recovery targets to assess the pressures that wastewater exerts on the Puget Sound ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, the Science Panel provided a review of technical materials developed in support of target setting; and

WHEREAS, the Ecosystem Coordination Board has discussed potential ecosystem recovery targets, based on the background information presented in advance of their May 24 and 25, 2011 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the public and stakeholders were provided an opportunity to weigh in on the options provided; and

WHEREAS, a summary of information from these analysis, review, and engagement processes included in the meeting materials for the June 16 and 17, 2011 meeting of the Leadership Council provide sufficient background for adoption of ecosystem recovery targets consistent with the Partnership's guiding principles for target setting

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Partnership defines a functioning, resilient ecosystem to include:

Dissolved oxygen concentrations in marine waters to support Puget Sound species, communities, and food webs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Partnership's ecosystem recovery target for dissolved oxygen in marine water shall be expressed as:

By 2020, human-related contributions of nitrogen do not result in more than 0.2 mg/L reductions in dissolved oxygen levels anywhere in Puget Sound; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Partnership will work collaboratively with partners to develop a robust system of monitoring and indicators to describe the condition of the region's marine water quality, including the marine water quality composite index that has been adopted by the Partnership as a Dashboard ecosystem indicator; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that reevaluation of the target adopted by this resolution will be triggered at the direction of the Partnership's Science Panel based on their evaluation of scientific information about ecosystem conditions and pressures.

Resolution Moved By: David Dicks

Resolution Seconded By: Dan O'Neal

Approved/Denied/Deferred (underline one)

DATE: June 16, 2011